

Figure SC810.F29. Sample Hearing Loss Claim

SAMPLE HEARING LOSS CLAIM - VEHICLE OPERATOR SUMMARY

Mr. Jackson is a 60-year old employee who has claimed a job-related hearing loss. He alleges frequent exposure to hazardous noise while employed as a Vehicle Operator for a 9-year period.

CLAIMANT'S STATEMENT

I work as a Vehicle Operator in the Transportation Squadron and have been working out of Base Operations on the flightline for nine years.

We have many transient KC 135 aircraft coming from other bases and that land here and unload and load personnel without shutting their engines off. This makes a lot of noise and we take personnel to within approximately 50 feet of the aircraft to exchange personnel. Also, our own base KC 135 aircraft on training missions change crews many times without shutting down engines. The frequency of these changes varies, but will average five or more times per week.

SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

1. I have been Mr. Jackson's supervisor for the past four years in his position as Vehicle Operator.
2. Essentially, Mr. Jackson's statement of his duties is accurate. However, I do not believe that the performance of those duties contributed to his alleged hearing difficulties. Personnel changes take less than 10 minutes each, from start to finish, and hearing protection is provided. Mr. Jackson is involved in an average of 15 to 20 changes a day. The rest of the time, the drivers sit inside in a lounge-type environment and watch TV, play cards, and talk among themselves.
3. Drivers are prohibited from being within 50 feet of aircraft when engines are running which at most is 10 percent of the time.
4. Drivers simply deliver passengers from the terminal to the aircraft and return to the terminal. Normally, they do not leave the bus.

5. Hearing protection includes ear plugs that were issued and fitted by the base clinic. Mr. Jackson has had his ear plugs since his first day of employment as a Vehicle Operator. He regularly wears his hearing protection. All employees have been counseled regarding proper procedures for wearing hearing protection. Mr. Jackson was in attendance when counseling was provided on the following dates:

16 February 1986
23 March 1987
12 January 1988
1 March 1989
2 April 1990
13 February 1991
20 March 1992

Mr. Jackson and I both take sound safety practices seriously and to my knowledge he has never been observed or known to work without wearing his ear plugs when his duty so required.

6. Mr. Jackson retired from the Air Force (military) before his employment here. Additionally, he plays in a band on weekends and is a voluntary firefighter in his community. It appears that these factors may have contributed to his hearing problems if, in fact, they are noise related.